

how important it is and realize that it not only fosters education of our youth, but it also provides the veterans an opportunity to explain things perhaps that no one has ever asked them or taken the time to say, what was it like? So in a way, it is an opportunity for them, as well as the students.

I urge adoption of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank Mr. PALLONE for authoring this resolution. I know many of us who give speeches on Memorial Day and on Veterans Day note always that there are not many youth in the audience. And to bring these stories to our students, to our youth, is extremely important.

I ask unanimous support of this resolution.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I would also ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in way to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Concurrent Resolution 60.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 60.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 744) recognizing the contributions of Native American veterans and calling upon the President to issue a proclamation urging the people of the United States to observe a day in honor of Native American veterans.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 744

Whereas there are 195,871 Native American veterans in the United States;

Whereas Native Americans have participated for over 200 years in United States military actions;

Whereas the participation of Native Americans in the War of 1812, the Civil War, and the Spanish-America War was significant;

Whereas in World War I, it is estimated that more than 12,000 Native Americans served the United States Armed Forces;

Whereas more than 44,000 Native Americans served in the Armed Forces during World War II, in both the European and Pacific fronts, representing a substantial portion of the 350,000 Native Americans then living in the United States;

Whereas Native Americans fought in the Korean conflict, and more than 42,000 Native Americans fought in the Vietnam War, 90 percent of whom served as volunteers;

Whereas Native Americans also provided significant contributions in the military operations in Grenada and Panama and the Persian Gulf War in 1980s and 1990s; and

Whereas Native Americans should also be recognized for their participation in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom: Now, therefore, be it—

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes all Native American veterans who have served the Nation with honor, pride, devotion, wisdom and strength for serving their country and protecting their homeland; and

(2) calls upon the President to issue a proclamation urging the people of the United States to observe a day honoring Native American veterans with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution to recognize our Native American veterans who have served and continue to serve this Nation with honor and with pride. I represent a county in California, San Diego, that has one of the largest numbers of Native American tribes in our Nation, and I have heard many of their stories. We know that Native Americans have participated with distinction in U.S. military actions for more than 200 years. Their courage, determination, and fighting spirit are well documented throughout our history.

It is well recognized, also, that Native Americans have the highest record of service per capita when compared to other ethnic groups. Presently, there are almost 200,000 Native American military veterans alive today. At least 18,000 of the 22,000 Native Americans currently in uniform have been deployed at least once to Iraq or Afghanistan as of July of this year.

Native Americans who volunteer for military service aspire to uphold their proud cultural tradition. This warrior tradition is a willingness to engage the enemy in battle. This characteristic has been clearly demonstrated by the courageous deeds of our Native Americans in combat. Five Native Americans have been among those soldiers who distinguished themselves by receiving the military's highest award, the Medal of Honor. This medal is given for military heroism "above and beyond the call of duty." These warriors exhibited extraordinary bravery in the face of the enemy and, in two cases, made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

This House, led by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, had the enormous privilege of naming two Veterans Affairs Medical Centers in honor of these heroes just last June. Charles George was a member of the Cherokee tribe

from North Carolina and private first class in Korea when he was killed on November 30 of 1952. During battle, George threw himself upon a grenade and smothered it with his body. In doing so, he sacrificed his own life, but saved the lives of his comrades.

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Ernest Childers was a member of the Creek Tribe from Oklahoma and a First Lieutenant with the 45th Infantry Division. He received a Medal of Honor for heroic action in 1943 when, up against machine gun fire, he and eight men charged the enemy. Although suffering a broken foot in this assault, Childers ordered covering fire and advanced up the hill, single-handedly killing the snipers, silencing two machine gun nests, and capturing an enemy mortar observer.

The warrior tradition is exemplified by strength, honor, pride, devotion and wisdom. These qualities are a perfect fit with our Nation's proud military traditions.

I urge the people of our Nation, I urge the Members of this Congress, to make sure we have a day honoring our proud and brave Native American veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important resolution, H. Res. 744, obviously, recognizing the contributions of Native American veterans is important, and asking the President to issue a proclamation urging the people of the United States to also observe a day of honor for Native American veterans. My colleague from California has talked about this. It's interesting; we recognize the contributions of Native American veterans to our society and, of course, by so doing, we are recognizing their achievements, their singular achievements, if I might add. I compliment the resolution that was introduced by my good friend, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON), and the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN) for their support and also their prescience for bringing this bill forward.

We have Veterans Day less than a week away, my colleagues. I think it's important this body recognize one often overlooked group of veterans. These veterans have made numerous contributions to the United States military, not just recently in World War II, but as far back as the War of 1812. Currently, there are 195,000 Native American veterans who live in the United States. According to the U.S. Army Center of Military History Web site, there have been 24 Native American Medal of Honor recipients since the Civil War. Let me just repeat that. There have been, according to the U.S. Army Center of Military History Web site, there have been 24 Native American Medal of Honor recipients.

During World War II, we know about the Navajo Code Talkers, whose ranks

in the Pacific Theater exceeded 400 during World War II, and in all six Marine divisions from 1942 to 1945. They were credited with saving thousands of lives and actually hastening the end of the war itself. At the time of the war, World War II, fewer than 30 non-Native speakers understood the Navajo's unwritten language. The size and simple complexity of the language made the code extremely difficult to comprehend, much less decipher. In fact, it was not until 1968 that the United States Government declassified the code. The Japanese never were able to decode this code. So that is a compliment to their accomplishments with the Navajo Code Talkers. In fact, there has been a movie made on it.

In Congress, we have begun to recognize the extraordinary achievement from veterans such as these. This past June, the House passed H.R. 366. This was introduced by Congressman John Sullivan of Oklahoma, naming the Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic in Tulsa, Oklahoma, as the Ernest Childers Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic. This man was a Native American from the Creek nation, who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his courageous actions during World War II.

In addition, the House passed H.R. 2546, which names the Asheville VA Medical Center after another brave Native American, PFC Charles George. He also was honored with the Medal of Honor posthumously for his actions in the Korean War. H.R. 2546 was passed last week by the Senate and now is awaiting the President's signature.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is because of the gallant actions of our Native American veterans like those of Lieutenant Colonel Childers and PFC George, as well as the bravery and fortitude of the Navajo Code Talkers who served with the Marines, that I and other Members are proud to sponsor this resolution. We urge its passage. It actually recognizes the many contributions throughout the history of our Nation of our Native American veterans in protecting the freedoms that we enjoy in this country today. So I encourage all Americans, take time to recognize the sacrifice and achievement of these veterans.

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 744, which recognizes the contributions of Native American veterans and calls upon the president to issue a day in honor of their service.

As an original cosponsor of H.R. 744, I would like to thank Representative WILSON for introducing this important resolution to honor the service of our nation's Native American Veterans. I also would like to recognize Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman BOB FILNER and Ranking Member STEVE BUYER for their strong leadership and unwavering dedication to Native American veterans and for working to quickly move this resolution to the House floor.

For more than 200 years Native Americans have served in the military—at a higher rate than any other ethnic group. Now, in Iraq and Afghanistan, a new generation of Native

Americans serve their country. These young men and women, such as Private First Class Sheldon Hawk Eagle, from Eagle Butte, South Dakota and Corporal Brett Lundstrom from Pine Ridge, South Dakota, who were both killed while serving in Iraq, join a long line of Native Americans that have answered the call to duty on behalf of their country. Their service to our nation must never be forgotten.

To honor the sacrifice of countless Native American veterans, like Private First Class Hawk Eagle and Corporal Lundstrom, I encourage my colleagues to support final passage of this resolution.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 744 and in honor of this country's Native American veterans.

For well over 200 years, Native Americans have provided military and strategic service to the U.S., acting as patriotic soldiers and standing side-by-side their fellow citizens in defense of our country. There are nearly 200,000 Native American veterans in the U.S. today, including members of every single tribe and pueblo. In New Mexico, there are countless stories of heroic Native American men and women serving in uniform.

I am proud to have sponsored earlier legislation to honor Native American veterans. During the 106th Congress, I introduced a bill to honor the Navajo Code Talkers with the Congressional Gold Medal in honor of their dedicated service during World War II. These brave interpreters used their native tongue to carefully transmit confidential Allied messages regarding the movement and strategy of millions of fellow soldiers. Not once was their code broken. Sixty years after their service, these men were honored in the Capitol Rotunda with the Congressional Gold Medal.

This past Congress, I was privileged to sponsor a measure to allow Native American tribes to be eligible for grants to establish state veterans cemeteries on tribal land. This long overdue legislation ensures that those Native American veterans who desire to be buried at home will not have their final wishes denied. I was happy that it was passed and am encouraged that we will soon see the first state veterans cemetery locate on tribal land.

To date, 47 Native Americans have given their lives in Afghanistan and Iraq. We honor their memory and their sacrifice by ensuring the Native American veterans who return home and granted the respect they deserve. As we approach Veterans Day later this week, we must remember that Native American have served our nation with pride, and continue to put on the uniform with bravery, honor, and dignity. I urge all of my colleagues to thank all veterans for their service, and to recognize the considerable sacrifice given by our country's Native Americans.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 744.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD on H. Res. 744.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR THE REAPPOINTMENT OF ROGER W. SANT AS A CITIZEN REGENT OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate joint resolution (S.J. Res. 7) providing for the reappointment of Roger W. Sant as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate joint resolution.

The text of the Senate joint resolution is as follows:

S.J. RES. 7

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, in accordance with section 5581 of the Revised Statutes (20 U.S.C. 43), the vacancy on the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, in the class other than Members of Congress, occurring because of the expiration of the term of Roger W. Sant of Washington, D.C., is filled by the reappointment of Roger W. Sant, for a term of 6 years, effective October 25, 2007.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks in the RECORD and include extraneous matter.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this joint resolution will reappoint Roger W. Sant to be a citizen regent of the Smithsonian Institution for a second 6-year term. The last few years have been very difficult ones for the Smithsonian. The aftermath of the September 11 attacks